

§ 106-277.30. Filing complaint; investigation; referral to Seed Board.

(a) Complaint by Buyer. – When a buyer believes that he or she has suffered damages due to the failure of agricultural or vegetable seed to produce or perform as labeled or as warranted, or as the result of negligence, the buyer may make a sworn complaint against the dealer from whom the seeds were purchased, alleging the damages sustained or to be sustained, and file the complaint with the Commissioner within such time as to permit inspection of the seed, crops, or plants. The buyer shall send a copy of the complaint to the dealer by registered or certified mail. A filing fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall be paid to the Department with each complaint filed. This fee may be used by the Commissioner to offset the expenses of the Seed Board incurred under G.S. 106-277.32. Within 10 days after receipt of a copy of the complaint, the dealer may file an answer to the complaint and, in that event, shall send a copy to the buyer by registered or certified mail.

(b) Investigation Requested by Dealer. – Any dealer who has received notice, either orally or in writing, that a buyer believes that he or she has suffered damage due to the failure of agricultural or vegetable seed sold by the dealer to perform as labeled or as warranted, or as a result of negligence, may request an investigation by the Seed Board pursuant to G.S. 106-277.32. A filing fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall be paid to the Department by the party requesting the investigation. The dealer shall send a copy of the request to the buyer by registered or certified mail. The buyer may file a response to the request with the Commissioner within 10 days of receipt of the request for an investigation.

(c) Referral to Seed Board. – The Commissioner shall refer the complaint or request for investigation to the Seed Board to investigate and make findings and recommendations on the matters complained of pursuant to G.S. 106-277.32. (1998-210, s. 3.)